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NEWSLETTER

104-1549

29 February 1996

Washington, DC

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH! By joint resolution enacted in December 1963, the Congress mandated that the President of the United States annually declare February as American Heart Month.

The reason I am wanting to mention this is because more than 60 million Americans — 1 in 4 — suffer from cardiovascular diseases. In 1996 alone more than 954,000 Americans will die from heart attack, stroke, or other cardiovascular disease.

You may have a member of your family or a close friend who has suffered a heart attack or stroke. If so, then you know firsthand the enormous toll these diseases take on families and their children, not to mention the related health care costs.

In recent years, awareness programs have resulted in the death rates for coronary heart disease and stroke falling significantly. This means the word is getting out about how important it is to lead a healthy life. What we must all focus on is prevention, and that means eating a diet low in fats and cholesterol and high in fiber, being physically active, and controlling our blood pressure.

Here on the federal level Congress is committed to fighting cardiovascular diseases at all levels, including making heart and stroke research funding a top priority. At the same time emphasis is being placed on programs that encourage physical activity and healthy diets.

Hopefully in the years to come the incidence of major cardiovascular disease will increasingly lessen. As it does, life expectancy will significantly increase.

Be sure not just this month, but all year long to do your part. It only makes good sense to do so.

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FINANCIAL AID FOR TEXAS STUDENTS. As students prepare for college, they often discover that their own financial resources are not enough to meet the costs of attending the college of their choice. In an effort to help students learn of sources of financial help which exist, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has put together a booklet designed to assist students and parents understand the "ins and outs" of acquiring financial aid. It is an excellent reference for high school counselors, and should provide useful information for guiding students and parents through the financial aid maze.

This booklet provides a brief summary of the statewide financial aid programs now operating in Texas. Interested individuals may obtain copies of this by contacting me here at my Washington office.

For example, the following are some of the programs referenced in this guide:

BEOG -- Basic Educational Opportunity Grant, now called the Federal Pell Grant.

CWSP -- College Work-Study Program, now called the Federal Work-Study Program.

FFELP -- Federal Family Education Loan Program, formerly called the Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Federal Stafford Loans, and Federal PLUS Loans are part of the Federal Family Education Loan Program.

FPLUS -- Federal PLUS loan program, which offers a type of loan made through the Federal Family Education Loan Program.

FSEOG -- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program.

FWS -- Federal Work-Study Program.

GSL -- Guaranteed Student Loan, now called the Federal Family Education Loan Program. Federal Stafford Loans, and Federal PLUS Loans are part of the Federal Family Education Loan Program.

HEAL -- Health Education Assistance Loan.

HHCSLP -- Hinson-Hazlewood College Student Loan Program, formerly the Texas Opportunity Plan.

NDSL -- National Direct Student Loan, formerly the National Defense Student Loan, now called the Federal Perkins Loan.

PLUS -- One type of loan made through the Federal Family Education Loan Program, now called the Federal PLUS Loan Program.

SIG -- Student Incentive Grant, the state matching program for federal SSIG funds.

SSER -- State Scholarship Program for Ethnic Recruitment.

SSIG -- State Student Incentive Grant.

SEOG -- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, now called the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant.

TCWSP -- Texas College Work-Study Program.

TEG -- Tuition Equalization Grant.

TOP -- Texas Opportunity Plan, now called the Hinson-Hazlewood College Student Loan Program.

TPEG -- Texas Public Educational Grant.

If you're looking for avenues of financial assistance to help in meeting the costs of college tuition, this is one source you will find invaluable.

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